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SOCIAL HIERARCHIES, STATUS, AND THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE SELF

INTRODUCTION

Psychology has to be seen within the socio-historical-cultural (SHC) context. To understand the self in a particular society requires awareness of the social structures, cultural norms, and historical aspects of that society. The self will be constructed with reference to all these.

Bruner (1990) sees the self as "the sum and swarm of participations in social life". In other words, the self and its many aspects (like self-esteem) are a social product. However, there is not a single cultural self because the position in the social hierarchy will lead to variations in the social construction process.

Bradley (1996) lists four variables of the social hierarchy that influence the social construction process: social class, gender, ethnicity, and age. Ultimately in Western societies today, which have clear hierarchies based on wealth above all other values, in the main, signalling status is a crucial part of behaviour and of the self. Thus the behaviour of individuals legitimates the system in their desire to support it through signalling of status and position, but in turn the system is constructing the self. The level of determinism within this two-way process is open to debate.

Ridgeway and Walker (1995) note two uses of the word "status": "a position in a social system" (status structures), and "a position of value or worth in the community that was communicated through the cultural symbolism of one's possession and consumption" (status value) (p281). The latter are communicated most strongly with "designer goods".

A high position in the social hierarchy creates respect which allows the individual the ability to influence others (ie power). The persistence of the system requires the structures to be supported by a variety of interactional contexts ie individuals meet the hierarchy in everyday life. For example, gender interactions between individuals act out the social differences.

But rather than the hierarchy being fixed structures, it is more fluid and there may be multiple status characteristics at work in a situation. Income/wealth is always a key indicator of status, but this being replaced by fame. It is assumed that fame will bring wealth, but fame has become a commodity with its own value. Thus individuals can achieve fame for something of no ultimate value other than being the

"flavour of the month".

Brewer (2001) has argued that "consumer capitalism" is a form of "civil religion", and within this context, "salvation by fame" has become the fast track to the top of the social hierarchy.

SOCIAL CLASS

Social hierarchies are traditionally created through social classes. There are many different models of social class, varying from the Marxian ideas to the Registrar-General's Classification of Occupations among others. It is not about which model of social class is appropriate or not, it is enough to assume the existence of some forms of social class.

Though there is much flexibility in British society, and the distinctions of the social hierarchy may run across gender, ethnic or age lines as much as social class.

Argyle (1994) explains the psychology of social class as individuals attracted to others at a similar level in the hierarchy. This similarity is emphasised and becomes labelled as a "class" in time. Membership of this group becomes a source of self-esteem, and is internalised as part of the self identity. What is important here is that much of the social construction of identity through the social hierarchy is in relation to the body. The body is a commodity in modern society: it equals capital, and is involved in creating and reproducing social differences.

Bourdieu (1978; cited in Woodward 1997) talks of "habitus": class determined bodily dispositions which the individual's reactions to situations. For example, traditional working-class emphasis on manual labour produces an instrumental relationship to the body ie a means to an end. The body is only valued to the extent of this relationship: eg muscular body and high price upon physical prowess. While those higher up the social hierarchy view the body as a project to be perfected through treatments (eg plastic surgery) or classes (eg etiquette of elite finishing schools for "ladies"). The view of perfecting the body has, through advertising, become a project for most individuals irrelevant of their position in the social hierarchy.

ATTENTION

Derber (2000) argues that members of privileged groups receive attention, and those of subordinate groups experience "a certain daily invisibility". The attention

for those of status is defined as having greater worth, and thus deserving of attention. A rich individual is interesting because of their wealth - how they got it (eg self-made business); their views on current affairs carry weight (whether they are experts in that field or not); and they have "attractive" personalities. What is more they are able to permanently exhibit their "badges of ability" (Sennett and Cobb 1972).

The symbols by which these individuals have got to the top of the social hierarchy. In a meritocracy, those who are good at socially desirable behaviours will gain status - those who have the skills to lead the society will come to lead. The cream will rise to the top, as the saying goes. Whether this is ever true is open to debate, but status in Western societies is far from fairly earned. Wealth, for example, is passed from generation to generation. Fame can be achieved for anything - particularly the cult of "celebrity".

The growth of the pornographic film industry, for example, has allowed individuals acting here to become famous for their activities. This is parallel to the Hollywood film industry, and there are equivalent award ceremonies. Ironically, the pornographic film industry in the USA makes more money than the film and record industries (Dworkin 1981).

Consumerism has made it possible to "purchase" attention (and status) for everyone to a degree. More than that, advertising has persuaded members of the subordinate classes to buy certain products for their "attention-gaining benefits".

Advertising successfully persuades consumers that without certain products they will appear either ugly, uncultivated, or offensive, leading others to withdraw attention. Listerine ads warn people of the consequences of bad breath, cosmetic ads condemn unsightly, pimpled, or wrinkled skin. Buying commodities thus helps reduce personal anxieties about getting attention: if most members of the society cannot afford to buy clothes and other expensive goods to make them fashionable or "glamorous" like the upper classes, at least they can avoid the "blemishes" that might mar their appearance by making relatively inexpensive consumer purchases (Derber 2000 p62).

However, there are times when the powerful are invisible and the powerless visible. This is when those in power want to do things without being seen (eg "dodgy deals"). Those at the bottom of the hierarchy become visible in the case of homelessness and sleeping rough on the streets.

INVISIBLE BECOME VISIBLE

Those who live on the streets of cities are visible in the way that they would probably prefer not and so would others in society. The latter respond by blaming the homeless for their own plight, and thus perpetuate the legitimization of the system.

How do individuals who are living on the streets respond to their position in society? How is the self constructed in such an environment of social criticism? Snow and Anderson (1993) did ethnographic research with "homeless street people" in a large US city. For the researchers, the position of such individuals in society is continuously reinforced by insults, being avoided, and receiving of charity.

The task the homeless face of salvaging the self is not easy, especially wherever they turn they are reminded that they are at the very bottom of the status system (Snow and Anderson 1993 p201).

Leaving aside the causal explanations and sense-making individuals use as to how they came to be here, Snow and Anderson note three processes involved in the construction of social identity: distancing, embracement, and fictive storytelling.

1. Distancing

The social identity of homelessness is not the desired self image of the individual. Thus individuals attempt to distance themselves from such an identity, to emphasise how they are not like other homeless people. These processes can be used in other situations as well where individuals need to "maintain face".

The distancing of oneself is from general and specific individuals of that category. A "narrative" is produced which shows how the individual is only temporarily a member of this social category or the reason for being so is different to others (eg "they are here because of being lazy, me due to bad luck").

2. Embracement

The acceptance of aspects of a social identity but for specific reasons. For example, an "ideological embracement": living on the streets as an alternative to the materialism of society.

3. Fictive storytelling

Exaggeration of past events and future possibilities to further emphasise that the individual is not really

part of this group. Fantasising about the future is reinforced by a society where fame is just around the corner for everyone.

LEGITIMATION

The social hierarchy which is not based on "true" merits has to be supported by most of its members in order for it to survive. It is obvious that those at the top will support it by arguing that they deserve to be there. But those at the bottom come to believe that they deserve to be there, yet could rise if things go well. This used to be called the "American Dream": the idea of going from "rags to riches". Whether this ever really is possible is not the point, it is a key part of the structures that keep the system in place.

Della Fave (1980) argues that "highly placed individuals" can control encounters with subordinates such that the subordinate is impressed. Having wealth, for example, allows the individual to eat and drink quality, and travel wherever: such individuals are "free".

The vast output of the media shows the celebrities as having a great time. Occasionally they are shown to be human with ordinary failings (and unhappiness), but this reinforces the belief that it is possible for anyone to become famous. Yet celebrities are the same as ordinary people while being somehow different. They have special qualities, while being lucky to get there. Society is full of conflicting messages.

But why do those at the bottom of society not challenge such an unfair system? Mills (1956) argues that individuals are seldom able to connect their private troubles to the overarching structure of society. It would mean thinking of alternatives which is beyond most people. Giddens (1973) calls this "revolutionary consciousness".

Sennett and Cobb (1972) found that US blue-collar workers resented their material conditions and position in society, but rarely questioned the legitimacy of the system.

Within any system of religion or "civil religion", there are assumptions that cannot be challenged. For "consumer capitalism", the belief that it is the best system of economics is one such assumption. The system has legitimated itself: individuals are socially constructed as "little consumer capitalists". Individuals are "constructed to consume". The modern day heretic is not purchasing less consumer goods, but living without the "unnecessary". The heretic says "I don't need these

things", and corporations fear such individuals. "Consumer capitalism" is built upon selling more "unnecessary products", otherwise it collapses.

The current economic system is dependent on the continued social construction of consumer desire. In saturated markets for consumer durables, producers are reliant on replacement purchases and modifications to existing models to induce sales by expanding perceived necessities. Manufacturers operating in this environment are positioned in an ambiguous state, their role of supplying durable products to meet consumer needs conflicting with that of maintaining high levels of demand in order to continue production (Cooper and Evans: no date).

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Extraversion and Helping: A Small-scale Study with Bi-lingual Individuals in Germany

INTRODUCTION

This study was an investigation into the relationship between introversion-extraversion and altruistic behaviour using bi-lingual participants in Germany.

Altruism as a personality trait describes "the elevation of the welfare, happiness, interests or even the survival of others above one's own" (Reber 1985 p26). Extraversion as a personality dimension refers to "the tendency to direct one's energies outward, to be concerned with and derive gratification from the physical and social environment" (Reber 1985 p273). Introversion describes "A turning inward" and refers to "the tendency to shrink from social contacts and become preoccupied with one's own thoughts" (Reber 1985 p388).

This study is based on previous research by Eysenck (1953). He devised a model of personality theory whereby introversion is opposed to extraversion and following from this that each has differing personality traits. Eysenck used psychometric measurement derived from questionnaire responses to assess extraversion-introversion.

Eysenck has also suggested a relationship between introversion and tendermindedness. Furthermore, introverts are likely to be conscientious, anxious and guilt-ridden. This suggests that introverts are more likely to show greater altruism than extroverts as they are more likely to display awareness of others and suffer guilt if they do not assist.

Other studies have supported this connection. For example, Rutherford and Mussen (1968) reported that nursery school teachers rated altruistic children as less gregarious and competitive than non-altruistic children.

The research hypothesis was that there would be a negative correlation between extraversion and altruism scores. The null hypothesis for this study is that there will be no negative correlation between the extraversion and altruism scores as calculated from the questionnaires.

METHOD

Design

The design was a correlational study with two questionnaires distributed to each participant. The Extraversion Questionnaire (EQ) was designed to establish whether the participant tends towards an extravert or an introvert personality type. The Altruism Questionnaire (AQ) was to determine to what degree the participant is altruistic.

Participants

An opportunity sample was used. There were three bilingual participants, two of whom spoke English as their native language, whilst the third had spent extensive time in England. Their ages ranged from 28 to 55 years of age, and two were male.

Materials

The Extraversion Questionnaire (Eysenck and Wilson 1975) contains sixteen statements to measure extraversion-introversion, with the choice of "agree", "disagree", or "not sure". Items include "Generally I prefer reading to meeting people", and "I often buy things on impulse". A maximum score of 16 was possible, and higher scores were associated with extraversion.

The Altruism Questionnaire (Open University 2001) also had 16 statements, and the same scoring key. A high score was seen as a sign of altruism. Items here include "I give generously to charitable appeals", and "I often jump queues".

This has only content validity, whereas the EQ is based on the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI), which has established validity and reliability (Eysenck and Wilson 1975). The questionnaires were in English.

Procedure

So as not to influence the participants they were not informed of the nature of the study prior to answering the questionnaires. However, informed consent from the participants, and the right to withdraw were explained.

The participants each received standardised instructions. These were presented verbally and in written format. Each participant then completed the questionnaires receiving both at the same time. The order

of which questionnaire was varied. This change of order was to rule out any possibility of bias towards one survey or the other. The questionnaires were distributed in a domestic lounge room and each participant was given ten minutes to complete both questionnaires.

None of them required the entire time. After completion of both questionnaires, and in accordance with the British Psychological Society (BPS) Ethical Guidelines, a detailed debriefing and discussion followed.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows a summary of the scores on both questionnaires. A Spearmans test produced a value of 0.84, which is not statistically significant ($N = 3$; critical value = 1.00).

A positive correlation was found, when the hypotheses predicted a negative one. Participant 2 fits the expected pattern of scores only.

PARTICIPANT NUMBER	EQ SCORE (maximum score = 16)	AQ SCORE
1	11	11
2	4	12
3	9	11

Table 1 - Total scores on Extraversion Questionnaire (EQ) and Altruism Questionnaire (AQ) for all three participants.

DISCUSSION

The results did not support the research hypothesis. The calculated rho of 0.84 did not reflect a significant negative correlation between the extraversion and altruism scores. For this study the calculations did not support the research hypothesis, partly because of the small number of participants. Another possibility could be the cultural diversity of the participants.

As this study was carried out in Germany, language was an important issue. The participants were bi-lingual, living in Germany. One pertinent comment was made after the study, referring to EQ statement no.5: "I am fairly talkative when with a group of people". This person considers themselves quite talkative when at home in Australia, however, through language difficulties in Germany, they find they are currently much less talkative. Language can therefore be seen as an important

variable affecting interaction. If linguistically uncertain, a person may be more likely to act in a reserved manner when in the company of other speakers of "foreign" languages.

Cultural heritage differed between the participants. One of them was German, brought up in former East Germany, and the other two were Australian. These differences could lead to variations in attitudes. In socialist East Germany personal freedom was restricted, while shortages of consumer goods were common. Based on conversations with former East Germans, the author believes this may have led to the development of greater dependence between many citizens of this society. One could describe this as a form of altruism born of circumstance. Only further study could disclose whether this can be linked to extravert-introvert personality traits.

Considering that there were only three participants for this particular study, further research using larger groups should be conducted.

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Article written May 2001

Supported Employment for Adults with Learning Disabilities in the UK?

INTRODUCTION

Supported employment is a relatively new model of service for adults with learning disabilities (AWLD) in the UK and research is still in its infancy. This article will seek to find the place of the supported employment model within prevailing ideologies, practice and modernisation policies in the UK, and identify outcomes for all key stakeholders. Outcomes will be plotted in terms of advantages and disadvantages. Obstacles that exist within the UK to implementing this model of service, including local and national policy, issues around provider performance and funding will be discussed.

THE CONTEXT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT - DAY SERVICE OR ALTERNATIVE?

The history of day services for AWLD is convoluted. The original "occupation centres" emerging in 1913, emphasised sheltered industrial work as occupation. These were re-termed "Adult Training Centres" (ATC) and focused upon learning social skills via leisure and recreation, whilst still operating in segregated settings. The revised remit in 1979 by the National Development Group saw ATCs become Social Education Centres, where preparation for real work was developed, but by 1991 only 5% of those attending centres had obtained employment (Felce et al 1998).

Until recently, work has been an increasing and alternative option for AWLD in the UK within sheltered settings/workshops. Many people still work within them (Zarb et al 1996). These settings (including centres) have been recognised as offering little in terms of stimulation from repetitive work, or offering income.

Pressure on day services to "de-institutionalise" and support people within the community has been discussed by leading commentators since the 1970s and throughout the 80s and 90s (eg Kings Fund 1984). Concepts such as "normalisation" have extended beyond housing, and calls from "second generation" researchers for a "new paradigm" emphasised the primacy of community for AWLD (Mansell and Ericsson 1995). Service users themselves, although generally positive about day centres (eg Le Touze and Pahl 1990), often see it as an alternative to work (Jahoda et al 1989). The 1997 "People First Conference" passed the motion that "day centres should not waste people's time or people's lives" (People

First 1999). This is finally being acknowledged by Government in legislation, including the White Paper "Valuing People" (2001).

Influential commentators in the UK supporting real employment for AWLD include Mencap, the National Development Team, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and Kings Fund publications such as "An Ordinary Working Life" (1984) and "Changing Days" (1985). Although terms vary, the emphasis since the 1980s has been upon the "right" of AWLD to have a real job, in an ordinary workplace, surrounded by non-disabled colleagues, earning a real and comparable wage.

Approximately 16 years ago, supported employment as a model, informed by practice, policy and research in the USA (with national funding and support) was developed as an alternative to traditional day services out of frustration of outcomes delivered by these models (Beyer and Kilsby 1997). It can be defined as "paid employment, regularly scheduled, in integrated settings, for individuals with severe handicaps who require ongoing support in order to perform such work (Vocational Rehabilitation Act Amendments 1986: USA). Under many similar definitions everyone is employable, regardless of their age and nature or severity of their disability. It is by no means the only model offered in employment support services in the UK. Others include vocational training (sometimes called the "train and place model"), training within employment, community businesses or social firms and supported volunteering (McGrath 1995).

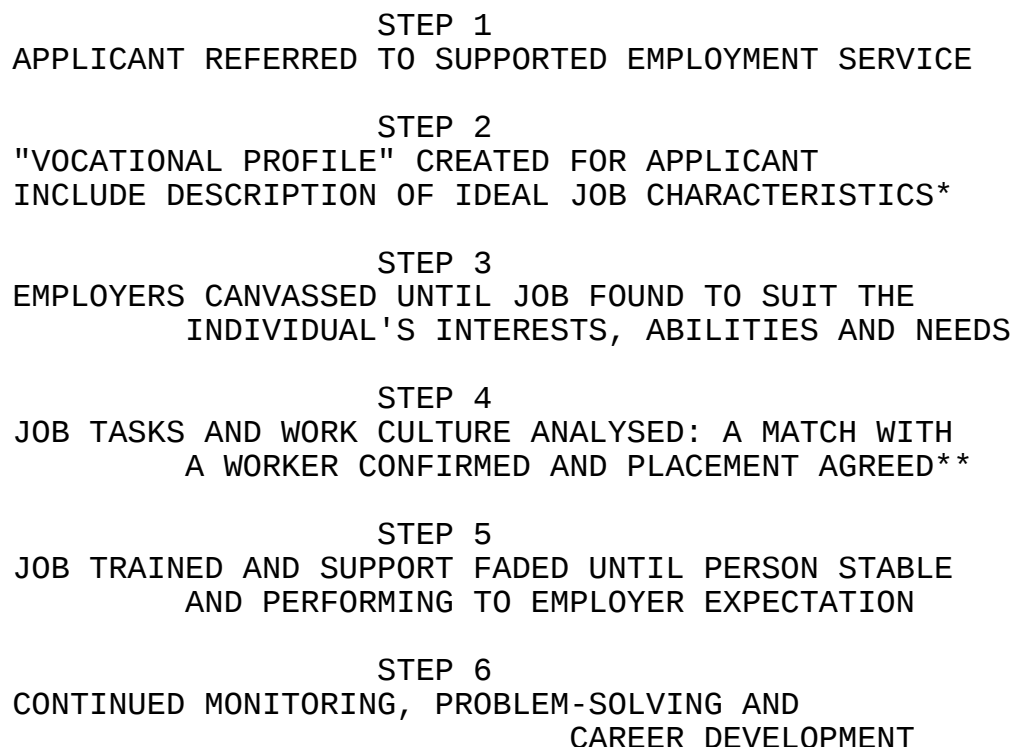
The latest Government figures (2001) estimate that there are 210,000 AWLD, and about 1.2 million people with mild to moderate LD in England (set to increase by 1% per annum for the next fifteen years). Less than 10% nationally are employed under combined models of employment (Valuing People 2000).

DEFINITION AND PROCESS OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT MODEL

Originally and often still termed the "job coach model", the supported employment model that will be explored in this article is the "place, train and maintain" model (Beyer 1996) of current technology as opposed to the "train and place" model that still operates, so unsuccessfully, as part of day centres and is still used by providers. Figure 1 summarises the main stages in the Supported Employment Model.

The supported employment process is overseen and training provided by a skilled job trainer. Here the technology has been refined to maximise integration and self determination for the supported employee,

particularly when requirements of the job change. Whilst "on the job training", often breaking tasks down into steps and identifying prompts and reinforcers in a training plan ("Training in Systematic Instruction" - Marc Gold and Associates in Keech 2000) led to good levels of skill, this interference by job trainers hampered both social integration and self determination of the employee. The early identification of co-workers as natural supports has been increased, and the teaching of self management strategies to the supported employee has reduced reliance upon job trainer intervention (Beyer and Kilsby 1997).



(* similar to person centred plans (PCP))

(** impact upon welfare benefits, other aspects of applicant's life, and demands of job agreed and understood)

Figure 1 - Key stages in the Supported Employment Model (after Beyer 1996).

In 1997, AWLD constituted 90% of those supported by this model (Beyer 2001), although this has shifted more recently to include other disabilities. Providers vary, agencies are both statutory and voluntary, and include the newly named Government initiative "Workstep". They have mirrored the process of deinstitutionalisation, in focusing efforts upon placing those with mild or moderate LD into employment first. Only 26% of workers in a study by Beyer in 1996 were labelled as having severe or profound LD. American studies have provided evidence

that this can be a successful model for this group (eg Lewis et al 1998: Mank et al 1998).

OUTCOMES - THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT MODEL

This model has several research-based advantages over others. It has been developed during a time of increasing commentary (including legislation) about outcomes and framework analysis of care and support services for users, both residential and day services (Simons and Watson 1999). As a result, it seems not to suffer from the apparent lack of aims and vision that are well documented for other models of service (eg MHF 1996; Fruin 1998). Potent legislation such as "Modernising Social Services" (1999) focusing upon promoting independence identified employment as "one of the most powerful pathways to independence". Best Value also focuses upon performance measures/outcomes and efficient use of resources and these directly challenge the day centre model (Simons and Watson 1999). Both processes and outcomes fit well with the influential "Changing Days" vision and identified by "O'Brien's Five Service Accomplishments" (O'Brien 1997).

OUTCOMES AND ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT MODEL FOR KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Key stakeholders include the supported employees (across the range of LD), their carers and families, providers, employers, local/national government, and society. Outcome specific to supported employment do vary according to the commentator. This article has taken a very broad view, from research, policy and practice, and acknowledges that different schools of thought place different emphasis upon each of these outcomes. Each outcome and its relevancy for pertinent stakeholders will be detailed in terms of advantages and disadvantages compared to other models.

1. Wages/income

Most AWLD (and their families) are poor. A job with a wage helps release employees and their families from poverty. Also increased disposable income can offer more opportunities for inclusion in the wider community.

Comparisons in financial gains to other models of day service and employment further support the advantages of income as a key feature of this model. Studies in the USA concluded that users are financially better off in

supported employment than in day services. Other have found that supported employment doubled the hourly pay rate paid in sheltered workshops. Social firms are the only other model where wages are paid comparably (Simons and Watson 1999).

However, a survey by Beyer (1996) has shown that although rates of pay are closer to the National Minimum Wage, many supported employees still rely upon benefits, to make up the shortfall from earnings or because they are better off on benefits.

Often with no qualifications or previous employment experience, supported employees take on low paid, entry level jobs in low paying industries, such as cleaning and laundry (20%), kitchen work (15%), and retail (15%) (Beyer 1996). There also hidden costs (such as travel expenses, clothing and equipment) (Keetch 2000).

2. Social integration and interaction -developing wider relationships

In terms of integration, supported employment does seem to offer more advantageous outcomes for employees. Beyer's 1996 major study of agencies found that 40% of workers had excellent levels of integration, and 38% good levels. Research has found that supported employees do interact with their non-disabled colleagues at significant levels.

Compared to another current model, further education, it has been found that the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act had actually led to a decrease in integration as students were placed in "discrete" classes. In comparison to day centres, Kilsby and Beyer (1996) found that supported employees' frequency and patterns of interaction became more like their non-disabled colleagues. Others have found an inverse relationship between needs for support and interactions with staff in the two situations (Bass and Drewett 1997).

Looking closer at the type of interaction, supported employees received more directive information giving, training and befriending attempts than non-disabled colleagues, but they was less likely to be teasing and joking (Beyer 1996).

There are variables linked to the success of this outcome - full-time supported employees better than part-time; those receiving natural support rather than on-site job trainers (Beyer 1996).

3. Satisfaction and quality of life

Researchers presented supported employees and sheltered workshop workers with a "user loneliness

scale", and assessed the degree of integration and involvement with non-disabled colleagues to measure quality of life. Supported employees scored significantly higher. A UK study also found that people were more satisfied at work than their previous day service.

However, disadvantages included negative interactions with colleagues or tiredness from work.

4. Engagement in activity

This outcome is a key indicator determining whether a placement is successful or not for job trainers, providers, employers, and co-workers (Beyer 1997). Beyer also noted the following: tension between workers if supported employees work more or less harder than their colleagues; engagement is directly linked to productivity and employers' expectations; any disparity in engagement levels can result in different potentials for social interaction.

However, compared to day centres, proportionately more time was spent in meaningful activity (21%; Kilsby and Beyer 1996), and engagement rose from 25 minutes per hour to 45 minutes. In a small New Zealand observational study by Reid et al (1998) engagement levels were recorded as over 60% higher in employment than the day centre.

5. Co-worker and employers' views

It has been noted that the views of employers, supervisors and co-workers are important for the success of supported employment. If supported employees have low evaluations from these people, they are more likely to lose their jobs.

6. Cost benefit analysis

Included in this outcome are wider issues like earning income and thus paying tax, not claiming benefits, and releasing costly day centre places. Time spent engaged in meaningful activity may also lead to less mental health and challenging behaviour problems.

OBSTACLES TO IMPLEMENTATION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT MODEL

There are a number of obstacles which include the following main areas.

1. Government policy

Certain policies in the UK would appear to encourage supported employment (eg "Workstep"), but there is a bewildering amount of local and national government legislation and initiatives. Coupled with inflexibility in the system, claimants are often afraid to take the risk of coming off benefits they had to fight hard to gain to take up supported employment (Keetch 2000).

2. Benefit disincentives

Beyer (1996) concluded that 37% of services identified the benefit system as a major barrier to work.

3. Carers' view

Carers appear to value day centres for a number of reasons including respite and social contacts for the users. They also doubt the idea of "real jobs" on supported employment. Reliance upon more stable benefits for the family economy may also play a role.

CONCLUSION

It seems that increased and sustainable implementation of this generically advantageous model will not come about in the UK until Government reforms welfare, centralises policy frameworks (Melling 1997), and provides core funding, similar to the American experience.

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WHY MEN PAY FOR SEX? METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES RELATED TO ANSWERING THIS QUESTION

INTRODUCTION

The whole purpose of research is to establish the "truth" about a particular behaviour. Traditionally, science "takes the nature of the social world as no more problematic than the nature of the natural world - partly hidden... but in principle open to discovery by properly fashioned studies" (Sapsford 1996 p147).

To say that it is very difficult to accurately ascertain how many men visit prostitutes is an understatement. However, research has attempted to gauge the figures, and to answer questions, like why do men pay for sex?

The aim of this article is to survey the different methods used with examples, and the problems of such methods.

There are a number of issues involved in studying such a hidden area of behaviour as visiting a prostitute:

i) When asking direct questions about the topic, there is a high possibility that the answers will not be the "truth". The participant may directly lie to keep their "deviant behaviour" hidden, or give the expected answer (known as the social desirability bias). They could, of course, give inaccurate information because of a memory deficit. They may misunderstand the question or the terminology used.

ii) How typical are the sample and responses compared to the general population? In other words, can the findings be generalised to other groups of men than those studied? The figures for how many men have visited a prostitute ever vary from very low (eg 2%) to much higher (eg 50%) (depending on the study).

Random sampling of the population allows generalisability, which purposive or snowball sampling do not. However, the latter techniques allow the researcher to reach the specific group to be studied, particularly when that specific group is not easily accessible.

iii) The ethical issues involved in this research. The main ones being privacy and confidentiality. Asking for volunteers overcomes this problem of invasion of privacy, but volunteers are not necessarily representative of the population.

For example, Rosenthal (1965) noted that the people who volunteer for psychology experiments tend to be younger, more intelligent, friendlier, and less conventional than the average, with a strong need for

approval. While, for Ora (1965), the same group are significantly different to the norm on insecurity, aggression, dependency on others, introversion, neuroticism, and being influenced by others.

It has to be asked as to what type of person volunteers to report their experiences with prostitutes to a complete stranger.

Observing clients as they pick up street prostitutes has difficult ethical issues associated with it. Usually it is acceptable to covertly observe if the individual is in a public place. Not asking for their consent to be studied beforehand, removes any fears of reactivity and "playing to the audience". But the picking up of street prostitutes is public, yet the clients would prefer it not to be.

This is very similar to the covert observation of behaviour in a men's public toilet by Middlemist et al (1976). It is public, but it is not at the same time. Hoigard and Finstad (1992) seem to have no problem with these issues in their observations in Oslo.

RANDOM SAMPLING

A general survey of lifestyles and attitudes could include questions about the use of prostitutes. These questionnaires are anonymous which may encourage honesty.

A UK example with 19 000 households found that 1.8% of men admitted having paid for sex in the previous five years (Johnson et al 1994). This establishes the number, not the frequency, nor the services purchased.

A Swiss telephone survey found that 12% of men (aged 17-30) had paid for sex (Hausser et al 1991). However, the telephone is less anonymous than the postal questionnaire, and there may be under-reporting. The phrasing of the question may also influence the findings; for example, "sexual contact" or "paid for sex".

Generally admitting to visiting a prostitute is not seen as socially acceptable. But among certain groups, like the military, it is not a problem. In fact, it is often seen as a sign of "normality" for male soldiers. Buma et al (1995) found that 45% of Dutch soldiers in Cambodia had had sexual contact with a prostitute or a member of the local population. This is slightly different to the other surveys mentioned so far, because of the inclusion of the local population, but the figures, some researchers feel, may be more accurate.

Hoigard and Finstad (1992) report a random survey sent to 1001 Norwegian men over 15 years of age with a

56.4% response rate. In other words, about half the sample did not respond. How are we to interpret this non-response? How representative is the sample that has been returned?

Hoigard and Finstad report disproportionately less responses from three groups - older men, least educated, and social security recipients. Overall 13% of the men answered that they had "paid for sexual contact/intercourse with a prostitute" one or more times. The median is three visits. The authors fear the figure is under-reported. But the survey did show little demographic differences between those who have visited prostitutes, and those who have not.

PURPOSIVE SAMPLE

This type of sampling is aimed at specific groups known to be relevant to the study.

McKeganey and Barnard (1996), in their Glasgow study, contacted two samples of men: one group who responded to a British national newspaper advertisement, and a group of men attending a genito-urinary clinic. The authors were also able to contact nine men seen picking up street prostitutes. This gives a total sample of 143. The authors were able to make condom use the focus of the survey as the research was conducted by the Public Health Research Unit at Glasgow University.

The focus of the research on condom use allows for participants to be aware of the topic and possible questions, but can volunteer to help (without embarrassment) because it is about public health. It is clear that they will be direct questions about visits to prostitutes.

Hoigard and Finstad (1992) managed indepth interviews with 74 clients of Norwegian prostitutes. The participants were recruited from newspaper and radio advertisements. This research did highlight a distinctive groups of clients classed as "habitual buyers" (eg sailors).

All the men in these research projects were self-selecting, which gives the high possibility of a non-representative sample. Furthermore, most of the purposive samples are small.

A number of the researchers operate with sizeable samples...indeed, so sizeable that they are on the boundary of believable. Despite their size, these samplings cannot be generalised, since the samples are not randomly drawn (Hoigard and Finstad 1992 p25).

OBSERVATION

Hoigard and Finstad (1992) detail a systematic observation in five days in June 1984 of the cars parked in the backstreet areas of Oslo associated with prostitution. The researchers recorded 8664 observations with 2834 cars. From this, they noted three groups of cars:

- i) peepers - cars that just drive around (332 cars were driven around more than five times on one occasion);
- ii) negotiators - cars who stopped to talk to prostitutes, but did not pick them up (103 men observed);
- iii) customers - this group picked up prostitutes (40 of the 103 men).

ANSWERING THE QUESTION - WHY MEN PAY FOR SEX?

Why men pay for sex is due to varied and individual reasons. But the research generally lists a number of reported reasons for visiting a prostitute:

- i) Specific sexual acts which men feel unhappy in asking their partners to perform, including "specialisms" like physical degradation. For some men, this may include not using a condom.
- ii) The opportunity to have sex with a large number of different women.
- iii) The opportunity to have sex with specific types of women.
- iv) The limited nature of the contact with prostitutes, and the lack of ties and responsibilities; also it allows men to think about themselves and not have to worry about "performing" for the woman.
- v) The clandestine nature of the contact can be an enjoyment in itself.
- vi) The availability of the women whenever the man wants.

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